(d) HMT has taken steps to modernise its operations and improve the functioning of its weaker units. The steps taken include; locating joint venture partners for technology transfer, financial investments, modernisation etc.

Export of Foodgrains

1217. SHRI SURESH PRABHU :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some countries have rejected the Indian foodgrains particularly wheat exported to them;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). A small number of consignment of wheat from India were detained by the Turkish, Moroccon and Polish authorities as they were found to be infected by Tilletia Indica (Karnal Bunt) fungus.

(c) Inspection of wheat for issuing Phytosanitary Certificate at the time of export for quarantine purposes is being carried out by the Directorate of Plant Protection and Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture or the Directors of State Agriculture authorised for this purpose by the Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage.

Agricultural Export

1218. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the tremendous potential available in Karnataka to increase agricultural export;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to create proper infrastructural facilities in order to facilitate agricultural export from the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BULLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). Rice, spices, floricultural products, fresh fruits and vegetables, cashew, sugar and tobacco are the main agricultural products produced in Karnataka which offer export potential. Most of these products have been identified as "Extreme Focus" products for achieving a quantum jump in exports.

Under a scheme for Development of Infrastructure in all States including Karnataka, financial assistance is being provided to eligible exporters for (i) purchase of specialised transport units; (ii) establishments of pre-cooling facilities; (iii) setting up of mechanised post-harvest handling facilities and sheds for grading, sorting, quality control and packaging; (iv) establishing vapour heat treatment/fumigation/screening machines for exports; and (v) establishing cold stores at airports/seaports for export purposes.

Coal based Industries

1219. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL :
SHRI VIJAY PATEL :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received requests from the various State Governments for setting up of coal industries in their respective States, during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(b) if so, the number of such proposals received, State-wise; and

(c) the number of projects sanctioned so far, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

PF Money Invested in Public Sector

1220. SHRI D.P. YADAV : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have issued guidelines for investment of 30 percent amount belonging to Provident Found in Public Sector bonds;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that the above amount is not misused?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The non-Government Provident Funds prior to 1-10-96 were required to invest inter alia, 30% of their net accretion in bonds/securities of "Public Financial Institutions" as specified under Section 4(a) of Companies Act, "Public Sector Companies" as defined in Section 2(36A) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 or certificates of deposit issued by a Public Sector Bank. With effect from 1-10-96 the percentage has been increased to 40%. These are debt instruments and the Funds will receive the prescribed interest periodically.

(c) The Public Sector Companies are owned and controlled by Government and they raise funds for meeting expenditure on approved schemes.